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**New Study Demonstrates Risk of Serious Gastrointestinal Problems & Bleeding  
Intensified by Combining Common Over-the-Counter Pain Medications**

***NSAID and Aspirin Use Leads to Significantly Increased Risk in Large Patient Population***

**HONOLULU, October 31, 2005** -- Patients who combine the common over-the counter pain medications ibuprofen and naproxen with aspirin have a risk of gastrointestinal complications including ulcers, perforations and bleeding that is two to three times greater than patients who take these medications but do not combine them with aspirin. Findings of a large retrospective review of medical records for over 3.2 million individuals were presented at the 70<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Meeting of the American College of Gastroenterology.

Researchers from the University of Utah and Pfizer Inc. included 11,957 patients on naproxen (220 mg) and 38,507 patients on ibuprofen (200 mg) in this study that used GE Medical System's Centricity database. Excluded from the analysis were patients who took steroids, used blood thinners such as warfarin (Coumadin<sup>®</sup>), or had other significant health problems. Patients on ibuprofen and naproxen, known as non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), were 2.5 to 2.74 times more likely to experience serious GI problems such as ulcers, perforations or bleeding than those who did not take over-the-counter pain medications.

When the researchers looked at the smaller groups of ibuprofen and naproxen users who also took aspirin, there was increased risk of serious problems. Patients taking both ibuprofen and aspirin had a risk of serious GI problems that was 3.4 times higher than patients taking just ibuprofen. For the naproxen and aspirin users, their risk was 2 times higher than those on naproxen alone. "Aspirin can significantly increase the risk of problems among patients using other over-the-counter NSAIDs," according to Joseph Biskupiak, Ph.D. of the University of Utah.

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***About the American College of Gastroenterology***

The ACG was formed in 1932 to advance the scientific study and medical treatment of disorders of the gastrointestinal (GI) tract. The College promotes the highest standards in medical education and is guided by its commitment to meeting the needs of clinical gastroenterology practitioners. Consumers can get more information on GI diseases through the following ACG-sponsored programs:

- 1-800-978-7666 (free brochures on common GI disorders, including ulcer, colon cancer, gallstones, and liver disease)
- 1-866-IBS-RELIEF and [www.ibsrelief.org](http://www.ibsrelief.org) (free educational materials)
- 1-800-HRT-BURN (free brochure and video on heartburn and GERD)
- [www.acg.gi.org](http://www.acg.gi.org) (ACG's Web site)

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